



# Town of Groton, Connecticut

45 Fort Hill Road  
Groton, CT 06340-4394  
Town Clerk 860-441-6640  
Town Manager  
860-441-6630

## Meeting Minutes

### Representative Town Meeting

**Moderator Kevin Power, Representatives Jean-Claude Ambroise, Joe Baril, Nancy E. Barnhart, Alicia Bauer, Nancy E. Beckwith, Christopher J. Burns, Michael Collins, Nancy M. Congdon, Warren T. Cooper, Luanne E. DeMatto, Syma Ebbin, Peter Fairbank, Nancy E. Gilly, Patrice Granatosky, Dolores Harrell, Keith L. Hedrick, Damon Q. Helme, Lynn Crockett Hubbard, Michael Dean Johnson, Rosanne E. Kotowski, Elizabeth Luck, Jackie Massett, Carole McCarthy, Karen F. Morton, Scott Newsome, Dana C. Parfitt, Richard J. Pasqualini, Jr., Kristen L. Powers, Don Pratt, Betty A. Prochaska, John F. Scott IV, Jack Sebastian, Dana S. Semeraro, Jennifer Smuts, Joan Steinfeld, Irma Streeter, Mark Svencer, Archie C. Swindell, and Robert A. Warn**

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Wednesday, December 8, 2010

7:30 PM

Groton Senior Center

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#### Regular Meeting

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#### A. ROLL CALL

*Moderator Kevin Power called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.  
28 members were present, and a quorum was declared.*

*The Moderator reported that Reps. Ambroise, Harrell, Helme, Luck, Svencer and Warn called to say they are unable to attend this meeting.*

*Members Present: Moderator Power, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Beckwith, Rep. Collins, Rep. Congdon, Rep. Cooper, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Gilly, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Hedrick, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Massett, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Morton, Rep. Parfitt, Rep. Pasqualini Jr., Rep. Powers, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Prochaska, Rep. Scott, Rep. Semeraro, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter and Rep. Swindell*

*Members Absent: Rep. Ambroise, Rep. Baril, Rep. Burns, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Helme, Rep. Hubbard, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Luck, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Svencer and Rep. Warn*

*Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, School Superintendent Paul Kadri, Thames Street Review Committee Chair Marion Galbraith and committee members, Mayor Jim Streeter, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.*

#### B. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG

*The members observed a moment of silence followed by the Salute to the Flag led by Rep. Cooper.*

#### C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 10, 2010

*A motion that the minutes be adopted was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Hedrick.*

*In response to Rep. Sebastian's request to include the facts that were detailed in his handout distributed to all members, the Town Clerk stated that it would be attached to the minutes.*

*Rep. Sebastian raised an objection that he felt his First Amendment rights had been violated when he was prevented from addressing the RTM after the vote on the Groton Long Point Police Department.*

*The Moderator clarified his actions after the motion to move the question which passed, ending any further discussion and the "Point of Order" that was raised after the vote.*

*The vote to approve the minutes carried 25 in favor, 3 abstentions. (Abstaining: Reps. Beckwith, Powers and Pratt.)*

#### D. CITIZENS' PETITIONS

*None.*

**E. RECEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS**

*Moderator Power announced that fifth district Rep. Sandry Ramos-Morales has resigned effective November 16, 2010.*

**2010-0234 Parks and Recreation Funding Recommendations**

**This matter was Referred to the RTM Recreation Committee, due back on January 12, 2011.**

**F. PRESENTATION****1. Thames Street Review Committee Report-Marian Galbraith**

*Chairman Marion Galbraith gave a presentation on the Thames Street rehabilitation project that is being scheduled for a special referendum on May 2, 2011.*

*Members discussed the ramifications if the referendum fails, the need to improve public awareness of the project, and the time line and complexity of the project.*

*The Moderator noted that a referral of the bonding ordinance should be forwarded for recommendation to the RTM Finance Committee in February and a vote held at the regular March meeting.*

**G. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER:****1. Financial report**

*Mr. Oefinger reported that the Fund Balance as of November 30, 2010 is approximately \$8.7 million; the General Contingency balance is \$350,000; the Capital Reserve balance is \$287,135. He noted the increase to the Capital Reserve balance is attributable to recording fees.*

**2. Monthly briefing**

*The Town Manager highlighted numerous items in the Town Manager News. He recognized Groton Public Library Director Betty Ann Reiter for her outstanding accomplishment as this year's coordinator for the Town's United Way Giving campaign. He announced a holiday open houses at the Avery-Copp Museum on December 12, 2010 and the new administrative offices of the Noank Group Homes and Support Services on December 9, 2010.*

**H. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

*Superintendent Paul Kadri stated that he will be providing information each month on what is happening in the school district and that the education department heads will address the RTM closer to budget deliberations.*

*Mr. Kadri distributed information highlighting the national recognition received by Charles Barnum School from the United States Secretary of Education and Rep. Joe Courtney as an example of public school success in academic achievement improvement. He noted that every student at Charles Barnum has reached proficiency in math and 92% in reading.*

*He provided information on a collegiate baseball league that is being located at Fitch High School this summer; Commit to Quit smoking grant program; the Phase II School Design bonding ordinance; establishment of a regional school calendar.*

*Members discussed the regional school calendar; how other Town schools can attain the same level of achievement as Charles Barnum; the recommendation of the Claude Chester site for the new middle school; the proposed use of geothermal heating and cooling in Phase II school design.*

**I. LIAISON REPORTS**

*No reports.*

**J. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**1. FINANCE- Chairman Hedrick**

*No meeting, no report.*

**2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SERVICES - Chairman Pratt**

*No meeting, no report.*

**3. EDUCATION - Chairman Swindell**

*No meeting, no report.*

**4. RECREATION - Chairman Warn**

*No meeting, no report.*

**5. PUBLIC SAFETY - Chairman Parfitt**

*No meeting, no report.*

**6. PUBLIC WORKS - Chairman Collins**

*No meeting, no report.*

**7. RULES & PROCEDURES - Chairman Scott**

*No meeting, no report.*

**K. OTHER BUSINESS****2010-0181 FYE2012 Budget Discussion****FYE2012 BUDGET DISCUSSION****This matter was Discussed.**

*Rep. Morton provided a spread sheet on the Board of Education (BOE) central office salary increases or adjustments ranging from three to seventeen percent. The total salary increase for central office staff amounted to \$102,634. She stated that if all BOE employees' salaries had been frozen, the salary increase would have been only \$38,367 for one new position. She noted that teachers had agreed to a wage freeze. She feels that the RTM was mislead during budget deliberations when no mention of the upcoming central office salary raises or adjustments were disclosed. She cautioned members that next year 's budget outlook is very bleak and that the RTM will need to delve deeper into the budget next year. She mentioned that the Connecticut Society of CPA projections are that the State is bankrupt, and that Connecticut has the highest per capita debt in the nation as well as a negative fund balance. She believes that our town should be cautious about expecting any State money next year.*

*Rep. Kotowski stated she is upset that the BOE declared that their budget was a bare bones flat budget with "no fluff" during budget deliberations in May. She feels that the \$102,634 in wage increases and adjustments should have been disclosed. She questioned whether if members do not ask the right questions of the BOE, they will continue to omit information that significantly impacts the budget.*

*Rep. Ebbin noted that the United States needs to improve its international education ranking. She believes that boosting educational scores will help foster a better work force in the future and improve economic conditions in the nation.*

*Members discussed the direct advantages of having a strong, diverse educational program that helps to create a community that is safe and desirable in which to live.*

*Rep. Sebastian addressed the members to clarify his comment at last month's meeting in regard to "Professor Streeter". He meant his comment as a compliment, since he recognizes Mr. Streeter as a prominent speaker and author in our community.*

**L. ADJOURNMENT**

*A motion to adjourn at 9:32 p.m. was made by Rep. Barnhart, seconded by Rep. Pasqualini and so voted unanimously.*

*Attest:*

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk  
Clerk of the RTM*

*Sally A. Whitney, Assistant Town Clerk*